

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

We Claim:

1-20. (Cancelled).

21. (Currently amended): A method of screening for a compound that decreases the number of bound B cells by decreasing decreases binding between a polypeptide comprising ~~an~~ the amino acid sequence of Seq SEQ ID NO:1 and the polypeptide's receptor expressed on B cells, the method comprising contacting said polypeptide and said B cell receptor in the presence of a test compound, where a decrease in binding of the polypeptide to the receptor, compared to that which would occur in the absence of said test compound, indicates said test compound decreases the binding of the polypeptide and the receptor, thereby decreasing the number of bound B cells.

22. (Currently amended): A The method according to claim 21, wherein the polypeptide comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2.

23. (Currently amended): A The method according to claim 21, wherein the polypeptide is a trimer.

24. (Currently amended): A The method according to claim 21, wherein the polypeptide is a homotrimer.

25. (Currently amended): A The method according to claim 22, wherein the polypeptide is a trimer.

26. (Previously presented): A The method according to claim 22, wherein the polypeptide is a homotrimer.

27-36. (Cancelled).

37. (New): A method of screening for a compound that decreases the activation of NF- κ B cells by decreasing binding between a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 and the polypeptide's receptor expressed on B cells, the method comprising contacting said polypeptide and said B cell receptor in the presence of a test compound, where a decrease in binding of the polypeptide to the receptor, compared to that which would occur in the absence of said test compound, indicates said test compound decreases the binding of the polypeptide and the receptor, thereby decreasing the activation of NF- κ B cells.